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SINKIANG IRRIGATION PROJECTS TO PERMIT AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION, PROVIDE HYDROELECTRIC FOWER RESOURCES

During recent years, some progress has been made by the people in Sinkiang in converting arid areas into farm land, but about 10.5 million mou of land which could be placed under cultivation still remain. The people of Sinkiang need additional water not only to increase food production, but also to provide such industrial raw materials as cotton, hemp, and sugar beets.

An extensive movement to increase farm productivity in Sinkiang was initiated by the People's Liberation Army immediately after its arrival. After completing repairs to canals now providing water for 87,000 mou of imm land cultivated by the PLA and 40,000 mou of farm land cultivated by the local farmers during the first half of 1950, the PLA undertook the construction of modern irrigation projects in various places in Sinkiang. Among the most important projects now under way ere the following:

1. Repairs to Hung-yen Reservoir and Ho-ping Canal Near Urumchi

The Hung-yen Reservoir is being repaired to hold 50 million cubic meters of water from the Ti-hua Darya. By means of the 48-kilometer Ho-pling Canal, this water can be used to irrigate 100,000 mou of land between Urumchi and Chilen-te. About 500,000 cubic meters of earthwork are required to complete the repairs. When the work is finished, the Urumchi area, which lacks a sufficient supply of local food, will be able to produce enough food to relieve its shortage.

2. Construction of Karashahr No 1 Liberation Canal

This 81-kilometer canal is being built to irrigate 800,000 mou of land in the area south of the Lo-t'u-ssu Ho by utilizing water from this river. In the near future, this canal will be connected with the K'ung-ch'iao Ho and the 82-kilometer Korla Canal to irrigate an additional 200,000 mou of land west of Ta-tun-tru. The K'ung-ch'iao Ho will be connected with the T'a-li-mu Ho to develop the vast wasteland west of Wei-li into rich farm land.

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3. Construction of Karashahr No 2 Liberation Canal

This canal will provide water for 1,200,000 mou of land north of the Lo-t'u-ssu Ho between Karashahr and Ho-ching from the Lo-t'u-ssu Ho. The canal is 105 kilometers long, and will require 3 million cubic meters of earthwork to complete the job.

4. Construction of A-ko-su Victory Canal

This 72-kilometer canal is being built to irrigate 800,000 mou of land west of Sha-ching-tzu in A-ko-su Hsien from the A-ko-su Ho. It requires 3.5 million cubic meters of earthwork to complete the canal.

5. Construction of Hung-heing Canal at Ha-mi

The Ha-mi area also lacks a sufficient supply of local food. The Hunghsing Canal is being built to irrigate an additional 40,000 mou of land in this area from the Shin-ch'eng Ho. The canal is only 32 kilometers long, but it will require 270,000 cubic meters of earthwork, and a large amount of stones and concrete before completion since it is being built through mountainous areas.

The above canals, totaling 380.5 kilometers, will provide enough water to irrigate more than 4 million mou of land. All the projects, with the exception of the Hung-yen Reservoir and the Ho-p'ing Canal, are being newly constructed. The earthwork on these new constructions is to be completed in 1952, and construction of dams, locks, etc., in 1953.

In addition to these projects, repairs are being made to the Hung-hai Reservoir in Pa-ch'u Hsien and the Ma-ch'ang Reservoir in Su-lo Hsien. Repairs to the 300-kilometer Te-li-mu Canal in So-ch'e Hsien and the T'ung-ko-ssu Canal in Ho-tien Hsien are also being planned.

The completion of these reservoirs and canals will have a great effect on the economic condition of Sinkiang. It will not only relieve the food shortage and develop Sinkiang into an area producing industrial raw materials, but it will also provide Sinkiang with hydroelectric power resources. Both the Hungyen Reservoir and a dam on the Lo-t'u-su Ho have a sufficient volume of water to permit the construction of a power plant of about 25,000-horsepower capacity. Twenty or more spillways are to be constructed on the canals leading away from the above dam and reservoir, and it is believed that a power plant of about 1,700-horsepower capacity can be constructed at each spillway. The electricity from these power plants could be used to supply both the domestic and industrial needs of Sinkiang.

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